2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
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communities where they became leaders, and the source of many new ideas and customs. In Għaxaq, for example, I found that a teacher born in Valletta had been the one to introduce the custom of decorating the streets for the festa.

It is, of course, extremely difficult, if not impossible, to discover the motives which prompted people to choose a particular partit. The only possible clue to at least one set of reasons may well lie in the correlation between occupational class and partit affiliation. Apart from this class alignment, I found no evidence in Farruġ, or any other village so divided, of any pre-existing structural division out of which these festa partiti might have developed. In view of the way membership is inherited, it would appear that the position which members of the great-grandfather generation occupied in the village class structure in some way influenced their choice of partit. There is some evidence for this, although not a great deal, to be found in the genealogies of the present generation. Frequent marriages with outsiders, emigration and the changing employment structure of the country over the past six decades have blurred this picture considerably.

But it is certainly possible that the new cult appealed more to those persons who held no office in the older confraternities and who performed no official functions in connection with the celebration of the annual festa of the village patron. Through the new cult they could gain offices and perform functions which hitherto had been monopolized by the circle of the village elite who surrounded the parish priest. Some informants have also mentioned that young men were particularly attracted to the new cult. In this we can see the universal resistance of the young to the authority of their elders, for by becoming active in the new cult, they were asserting their independence from the controls of the older generation. Were the secondary partiti then a form of protest against the established authority, a sort of underdogs' party?

Other facts appear to support the hypothesis that the foundation of the secondary partiti was in some way related to a wider working-class movement. Many of the partiti are dedicated to St. Joseph, the patron saint of the working classes who were beginning to organize themselves into formal associations throughout Europe. In Malta there are many signs that this devotion was very strong. In addition to the many new confraternities dedicated to

178 241 farms of Malta and Gozo are to continue operating.

It is hoped that some at least of the answer to this problem will come from co-operation and mechanization. The first implies the pooling of labour resources of individual farmers while the latter includes the whole range of developments leading to a replacement of hand labour, as far as possible under Maltese conditions, by machinery or by more efficient implements.

CO-OPERATION

241 476 Co-operation in field work between farmers is not new in Malta[23]. It is either permanent, where two or more farmers combine with each other to work a single farm unit, sharing profits and expenses, or temporary, as when two or more farmers share the use of a threshing machine at harvest.

An example of the permanent type is a case (Case VIII) where five brothers work one farm-unit as a team with one of their number being something of a primus inter pares. This [234] is an efficient and profitable arrangement with a substantial income accruing from the herd of some thirty head and the 70 tmien of land worked by the partnership.

Another case (Case XI) is that of two unrelated farmers working one farm-unit as partners after a lifetime's friendship. So completely are their resources pooled that it is not always clear what belongs to the one and what to the other. With their respective oldest sons (teenagers) these [233] two men operate a holding of some 100 tmien and have in [234] recent years joined in the change-over from goats to cows. Their joint herd now numbers some forty head, but as an economic unit is in a much inferior position to that of the first example.

A third example (Case X) shows two brothers working the fields held by them together but maintaining clear distinctions as to which brother owns which plot. This association has also endured for decades and now includes the full-time assistance of the oldest son of the brother.

An example of a temporary association is that where two or more farmers combine to thresh the grain of each man in turn, six being the optimum number for a threshing team which normally includes the owner-operator of the hired [178] threshing machine himself working as one of the team. In the days when the traditional threshing floor with the mule and hand-winnowing was the standard method of threshing (as before the 1939-45 War) different farmers would also join and help each other at the harvest. (Today this threshing floor method is confined to cases where a long straw is required.)

000 Direct hiring of implements from a contractor as against